



2017

LF&R Strategic Planning Community Stakeholder Task Force Findings



LINCOLN FIRE & RESCUE

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER TASK FORCE FINDINGS

FEBRUARY 2017

Lincoln Fire & Rescue recognizes the future of the fire service will continue to change due to multiple influencing forces, the greatest of which will be citizen expectations. Although we fully expect to see influences from all facets of the world around us, it is local service to local citizens that will drive the majority of changes. A strategic plan serves as a management tool that documents the shared mission and vision into a series of short-term and long-term strategic initiatives, goals and objectives. The intent is to drive the organization toward a common vision while optimizing organizational resources. In short, we don't want to waste time and energy on goals that lack a measurable outcome valued by our citizens. The process of strategic planning is as important as the final plan itself. The inclusion of internal stakeholders from all ranks and a diverse cross-section of external stakeholders were used to ensure our process moving forward will include efforts that reflected the community desires balanced against various financial and legal constraints.

Community stakeholders were selected by soliciting interested people from the community at-large via official news releases, various forms of social and traditional media, as well as word of mouth in the form of presentations to various community groups. Citizen stakeholders were chosen by random selection until a diverse array of demographic representation was achieved. Those selected attended nine sessions from January through March of 2017. The process took participants through a wide variety of lectures and discussions on fire department organization, levels of service, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Stakeholders also spent one day alongside firefighters involved in hands-on fire department simulated activities including live fire evolutions, mock rescue and EMS events. They participated in at least one session as a ride-along at one of our 14 fire stations. During the final sessions, participants were asked a series of questions related to their expectations as customers in light of the more detailed understanding of the cost/benefits of varying levels of service available.

Summary of Findings from the Community Stakeholder Task Force:

- LF&R provides a higher than average level of service at a substantially lower cost than a national or regional average.
- In the long term, investment will need to be made in the areas of fire apparatus replacement and facility capital improvements. Service levels will likely diminish within the urban core as well as the future growth areas unless these resources keep up with future growth. In the short and mid-term, progress is underway. Recent investment and the fire station optimization plan will result in five new fire stations in the next two years. Four new apparatus coming in spring 2017 and an additional ambulance will also help preserve service levels.

Summary of Findings from the Community Stakeholder Task Force: cont.

- There is a correlation between the City of Lincoln's Insurance Services Office (ISO) fire protection rating and regional fire insurance premiums. The City of Lincoln currently has an ISO Classification of 3. Class 1 agencies enjoy the lowest insurance premiums while Class 10 agencies experience the highest. A change in the classification for Lincoln, either higher or lower, could affect premiums.
- Fire prevention and community risk-reduction strategies are more cost effective than investing in strictly traditional emergency response capabilities. Additional investment should be considered to promote prevention and mitigation of adverse incidents.
- LF&R should expand their new cost recovery program to include certain types of calls for service that are unnecessary or caused by gross negligence. This additional funding should be used to offset traditional General Fund impacts.
- Morale plays an important role in effectiveness and efficiency within LF&R. Working conditions play an important role in the success of future strategic initiatives.
- Providing mutual aid and EMS services outside the city limits should be provided as a "good neighbor" policy; however, when core services are strained within the city limits, mutual aid and EMS services outside the city limits should be re-prioritized until additional capacity is achieved.
- Diversity within the ranks needs to be incorporated in future hiring strategies. LF&R will be more effective with a workforce that reflects the composition of the community over time.

Community Stakeholder Task Force Priorities Moving Forward:

1. Quality of fire and EMS service is critical. Measurable outcomes in saving lives is most important.
2. Ensuring quality service over time is also important. LF&R must prepare now to provide quality services in light of challenges and opportunities in the future.
3. Our fire department should be more than just a "call when needed" agency. We want to see it actively engaged as a community partner to help make quality of life better for all.
4. We understand that all goals and desired outcomes cannot be achieved in a single year. Incremental progress will be needed to achieve desired levels of service. It's all about getting better over time.



LF&R staff has taken these initial findings and priorities and developed a framework of 12 strategic initiatives that will be used to design an updated five-year Strategic Plan. The updated Strategic Plan will have measurable performance indicators for all the applicable goals so that progress can be measured as time progresses. The mission for LF&R staff moving forward is to build upon our successes and address our weaknesses as we strive to provide the service expected by the citizens and other stakeholders. The new comprehensive Strategic Plan is expected to be presented to the Mayor and Council later this summer.

12 Strategic Initiatives for Lincoln Fire & Rescue Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

1. Improve Odds of Survival During Emergency Events
 - 1.1 Improve Survivability of Victims of Fire, Hazardous Material Release, Entrapment or other Crisis Incidents
 - 1.2 Improve Survivability of Patients Experiencing Acute Medical Emergencies
 - 1.3 Improve Firefighter Safety and Survival
 - 1.4 Improve Agency Resiliency during Crises-Level Events
2. Maintain Agency's Ability to Meet Changing Service Demands Over Time
 - 2.1 Improve Efficiency within Current Budget System
 - 2.2 Improve Efficiency with Current Deployment Model
 - 2.3 Reduce Financial and Legal Risk and Liability to the City of Lincoln
 - 2.4 Prepare for Next Economic Downturn
3. Provide Value Beyond the Emergency Call for Service
 - 3.1 Improve Agency Reputation within the Community
 - 3.2 Limit Fire-Related Damage to Allow Occupants to Remain in the Impacted Structure after Suppression Operations
 - 3.3 Lower Fire Insurance Premium Costs within the Community
 - 3.4 Improve Employee Morale to Help Ensure Strategic Plan Success

